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AUTHOR	Edwards, Rosalind
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ABSTRACT

Thirty-one mature women students of different races and social classes were interviewed during the years 1988 and 1989 to determine how they separate and/or connect family and education. The women were interviewed either at the beginning and end of their first year of study, the beginning and end of their third year of study, or after they had graduated. The interviews focused on the women's changing perceptions of family and education from childhood to the present, the social and institutional contexts of their lives, ramifications of being a full-time student, and ways in which they balance their public and private worlds and families and education. In general, the women credited their experiences as students in higher education with boosting their confidence and changing the way in which they approach and are treated by public world officials. Nevertheless, participation in higher education had little change on the women's personal responsibilities. Family responsibilities continued to constrain the type of employment they undertook. Race, class, and institution attended also influenced the women's attempts to balance family and education. (Appended are profiles of the 31 women interviewed. The bibliography lists 144 references.) (MN)

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